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# THE JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY

## PSYCHOLOGY AND SCIENTIFIC METHODS

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### INSTRUMENTALISM AND MYTHOLOGY

WHENEVER, in the course of his history, man has beguiled an hour snatched from his immediately necessary pursuits to practise with and exercise his intelligence rather than some one of the other implements in which he needs to attain skill, he has asked of the world, "What is man? What has been his past, what will be his future? What is the purpose that guides him through life?" Of course, only a final philosophy could hope to settle those questions, and a final philosophy will not be possible until the spectator upon Sirius has beheld the last dying flicker of our solar system. But since man will obviously never cease to propound these embarrassing questions, we must needs seek some kind of answer; and we can find it in that very fact. "What is man?" The only really important thing about him is that he is the kind of a being who does ask, "What is man?", who knows that he has had a past and believes that he will have a future, and who is firm in the confidence that a purpose does guide him through life. How foolish, we may say, and many of us do say to-day; how foolish is this creature who persists in seeking to answer the unanswerable, to attempt the impossible! But it is exactly that which makes man what he is:

*Nur allein der Mensch  
Vermag das Unmögliche.*

Were man to attempt anything less, he would not be man, but a brute; and the most interesting fact of all about him is that so often he succeeds in his attempt! It is as if his very self-confidence, his very audacity and disregard of the actual aspect of the world into which he has got, as it were, by mistake, by a kind of cosmic blunder, so amazed and baffled mother Nature that she has no other course than to grant her spoiled child whatever he demands.

Man's first and most important work has always been to arrange the universe to suit himself. Fortunately he has never let the facts of existence bother him particularly; since those he finds so often displease his fancy, he considers it much preferable to construct a mythological universe of his own, and chastise Nature until she is forced to conform to his idea of what she ought to be. Mythology or philos-

ophy (for philosophy is simply mythology grown less colorful and more respectable) serves two important functions: it enables man to create a world congenial to his own personality, in which he can build a pleasant habitation while storms rage in the rude realms of existence; and it also serves for the creation of new facts in that world of existence, for the moulding of that world to the will of man. The hostile forces of Nature are seemingly too firmly entrenched to be taken by assault from the level plains of the pluralistic and purposeless realm in which they have their stronghold. Therefore man flees to the mountain-tops, and from their vantage-points he can easily train his guns upon his foe and slowly but surely beat him back. In fulfilling its dual function, mythology can and must build a Heaven into which man may escape if need be, and draw fresh inspiration; and it must furnish him with the architect's plans of some of the celestial mansions, that he may continue building operations when he returns to earth. It must provide the incentive, and indeed the final goal of life; and it must provide the means to the achievement of some measure of heavenly beauty on the drab fields of earth.

If, then, our view of the significance of man's incurable interest in the meaning and purpose of his life be right, he is a dreamer of dreams, a seer of visions. In an imperfect world he possesses the power of envisaging perfection; though he live in the depths of Hell, yet can he ascend to Heaven and behold God face to face. And the vision he glimpses of perfection is no idle escape from the evils of life; it alone enables him to make his imperfect world more perfect. The God he finds is a God who can help him in his battles, who can and will aid him in his long struggle to realize upon earth some of that perfection whose glory in the sky has dazzled his eyes.

The question, then, is not, "Should man philosophize, should he dream dreams and make pilgrimages to Heaven?" Being human, he could not well do anything else. The question is not, "Is there a Heaven?" It is rather, "What is the best kind of a Heaven?" If man be incurably idealistic, and persist in seeing life, not as it is, but as he wants it to be, how can he make the picture he paints the best kind of a picture? If he must build mythologies, the important point is to see that the mythologies he builds are the best possible ones, and serve his interests in the best possible way. They are of value in just that measure in which they serve the two functions of mythologies. Every satisfying philosophy must aid its maker in two ways: it must enable him to control and change his surroundings, to make the actual world he lives in a better place in which to dwell; and it must furnish him with an ideal world which can make his struggles worth while, which can console him for his failures, and spur him on to new successes. It must help him to build a new earth;

but it must also aid him to build a new Heaven. Control and consolation: these are the two aspects which every satisfying mythology must have. It must answer the very concrete and pointed questions, what is there which inspires men to battle for the right, to fight the good fight against whatever they regard as evil? and what is there which makes that fight worth fighting even if we know it is foredoomed to defeat, which makes it better to have died with the right than to have been crowned for the wrong? Why has the world been fighting Germany? And why shall we regard all of our suffering and sacrifice as worth while even if, as may very well happen, none of the things for which we are combating actually do triumph?

A brief survey of history will show that what we have called "consolation" was peculiarly the aim of philosophy from the death of Aristotle to the Renaissance, while in the modern era, the German tradition excepted, men have been far more interested in altering this world for the better than in improving Heaven. In the thirteenth century men lived in Hell but were very sure of Heaven. We are certain we have made a great advance because we live in Purgatory. The Greeks, wisest of all, found it Heaven to live on earth. They realized that the most important kind of control is self-control, and that that implies, not, as our Puritan ancestry urges, self-repression, but rather self-direction, the careful and intelligent application of man's powers where those powers can and should control, and the conservation of those powers where they can and should not. But then, the Greeks are a part of our own mythology; they people our Heaven. Such an ideal is not to be expected on earth.

To-day we are apt indignantly to reject any such thing as "consolation" as a return to the terrible Middle Ages, when man was so entranced with Heaven that he forgot earth entirely. We feel that any attempt to get man to accept the universe is apt to end in his believing that whatever is, is right. Our philosophy must say, whatever is could be better, and must show us how to make it better. It must be above all things a social philosophy. And we are offered what I was about to call a very definite social philosophy, pragmatism or instrumentalism—a philosophy which raises a clarion call for social control, which frowns upon all attempts at consolation, and which comes perilously near to abandoning entirely the philosophical enterprise of perfecting the imperfect and building a satisfactory universe in which to erect a satisfactory society. With the aim of this philosophy there is no one who is not in the heartiest sympathy; and there are few who do not welcome with hope and joy the method it offers to solve some of our vexatious social problems. It is just because we do feel so intensely interested in making man's life a better life, and are so sure that instrumentalism has offered us a

wonderful tool, that we desire it to be not merely a good tool, but the best possible.

Men being natural mythologizers, and setting out to complete the loose ends of existence, inevitably supply in their visions of perfection just those phases of life which are in the actuality most imperfect. When men emphasize the power of God, they feel helpless and impotent before the forces of nature. When they have gained a little mastery, they commence to lay stress on the wisdom of the Deity. And when they acquire a little knowledge, they straightway appeal to his goodness and beneficence. Man creates the gods, not in his own image, but in the image of that he would most like to be. And what he most admires is always present in his own nature, but in a subordinate degree. Gods always bear a family resemblance to their creators, but they are always better—better in just that point which is most prized because it is rare.

This is even more evident in our modern form of mythology, social philosophy. When men set about to tell their fellows what is the really right, the really natural form of social or economic organization, they emphasize precisely those features which are not realized in their own states. Writing political philosophy in universals, as Professor Bush so well phrases it, is the best way of writing it in the imperative mood. Man can not do otherwise and remain true to his nature. Behind his every demand for change and reform he must place the authority of the universe. Tell men it would be much better for them were they to be a little less arrogant and self-complacent, and you secure small results; tell them the Perfect Man said, "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth," and you cause millions to glory in humility. In the same way, tell men that perhaps ability and reward do not always coincide, and you make no impression; tell them that all men were created free and equal, and you bring about a French Revolution. Men possess an uneasy sense of their own fallibility, their own ignorance; they lack confidence in themselves. They are not strong enough to insist that their own ideals are right, and they can gain no hearing for them, until they are convinced that the world was created especially to bring about just what they desire. A man who has caught a vision of a better way of doing things may think it desirable to get men interested in bringing it about, but he can never inspire any real enthusiasm unless he is convinced that the cosmic processes are on his side. We may laugh at the Kaiser's assurance of the support of Gott, but let us ask ourselves whether *we* are not convinced that God, the moral law, and the law of evolution are upon the side of the Allies. Of course, in this particular case we happen to be right and the Kaiser wrong, obviously.

Take the social philosophies of Rousseau and Bentham, for instance. No one examining them to-day can fail to see that Bentham is in the main right and Rousseau in the main wrong. On the question of the rights of man, Bentham has all the facts. Men are not created free and equal. They have no inalienable natural rights. And yet when, in the heyday of the Revolution, Bentham pointed out these unpleasant facts to the French, they quite properly laughed in his face. They knew they had been born free and equal, because they were enjoying their freedom and equality at the moment. They knew they possessed inalienable rights; had they not just acquired them?

Rousseau and Bentham both had visions of a better life for man; but Bentham could have for years written volumes showing that man would be a little better off without a hereditary nobility, without the hundred and one abuses of the *ancien régime*, and there would have come no change. Rousseau told of the social contract and the inalienable rights of man which had been alienated; and his philosophy brought about the Revolution. Bentham's recommendations came from a middle-aged English gentleman; Rousseau's, from the creator of the universe himself.

Or take Marx's "scientific" socialism, as another example of the way in which man gets the universe back of his enterprises; more "scientific" than its predecessors only because more mythological. Marx did not bother with what was best, as the Utopians had done; he saw their failure, and so he showed that his particular ideal was inevitable, was a part of the onward-moving world process, and hence could not be escaped. No wonder the poor worker was cheered when he learned that in the future he had to triumph! No wonder he formed political parties to assist evolution! He was so sure that the absolute economic determinism of life had prepared for him a future of power and control that he made every sacrifice to aid the world-process. This, perhaps, is the chief value of the myth of determinism, that if we tell men they are bound to do a certain thing whether or no, they are so willing to aid nature that she seldom disappoints them. In 1914 men felt war was inevitable; and it came. If only our faith in the will of God had been as strong as our faith in the tyranny of the laws of nature, we might long ago have achieved the millennium.

To many to-day this method of securing the assent of God to all our plans seems a complicated and extraordinary way of accomplishing our ends. How much easier, they say, merely to point out the actual change we want; how much simpler to put our fingers on some particular reform, without necessarily altering the structure of the universe! Suppose we do think it wiser, for instance, to allow work-

men to share in the profits of the concerns for which they work. Why do we have to invent myths about the happy times in the Middle Ages when men lived together in joy and bliss, until the cruel capitalists descended upon the innocent workers, seized their property, and forced them to toil as slaves, that their masters, harsh, bloodthirsty tyrants, whose every act evidences selfish hypocrisy, might roll in wealth and comforts? Why do we have to talk about class-wars and revolutions, about the final catastrophe which is to be visited upon the cruel masters, and about the imminent return of the idyllic and happy Middle Ages? Why do we have to make all history revolve about this event, painting the universe, much as Augustine did, as the great theater set for this cosmic revolution?

The answer is simple. Men are made so that they have to do such things. They have to rewrite history whenever they wish to make it. They have to recreate the universe whenever they wish to change their way of life. To ask them to get along without all their machinery, is to ask the impossible. Like the bridge builder, they must erect great temporary scaffoldings by means of which to advance their permanent structure. They are so feeble by themselves that they must needs feel each step to be the last, lest they weary and fall before their task be accomplished. They must be spurred on by the vision of the New Jerusalem ever before their eyes, just over the next hillock. They must think the Celestial City is before them, that each weary effort they make to drag themselves onward is the climax of their age-long pilgrimage across the trackless wastes of time. What profiteth it to tell them that their dreams are but mirages, that the sandy desert stretches on and on into the dim reaches of the future, that no matter how great their advance the golden gates and the crystal mansions are destined to hover before their eyes ever the same distance away? They have beheld the Heavenly City, and it was near at hand.

Once again to-day the world has caught a vision of perfection, and once again she fondly hopes that she is about to realize it. We have fought this war that small nations shall secure their rights and that treaties shall be sacred, that the principles of justice and righteousness shall prevail. For us the course of history has been one long progress up to the final glorious day when mankind, in a League of Nations, shall have forever put behind it the wicked ways of its past. If we stopped to ask ourselves the question, we should probably admit that the world will be little juster or more righteous after the war than before it; and we might even deny that there is such a thing as justice or righteousness. After all, it will not be long before the ideals of nationality and the sanctity of treaties will have been superseded by something nobler and better. And yet—if we did not be-

lieve that there is a righteousness and a justice, that small nations have rights and that treaties are sacred—if we did not know that we *are* helping to make the world a better place to live in, we should never have gone to war, and we should have lost our souls. We have seen our vision, we have builded our mythology—and who will deny that that mythology is divine?

These, then, are the philosophies which actually control men: the philosophies which have caught visions, which regard them as worth while in themselves, and which spur their believers on to realize perfection in the world. Man, if he is to act at all, must believe in some absolute. He must have some ideal, valuable in and for itself, around which he can group his interests and towards which he can direct his actions. The man who is to accomplish things can not afford the luxury of relativism; he must possess some fixed truth—fixed while he is acting, at least. Men discover that some ideal is worth dying for, or, what is far more difficult, worth living for; and they accept that as a criterion by which to measure life. They seize upon a vision of universal peace, or of social justice, and they measure the imperfect world by the ideal it has called forth. Life becomes important as they can struggle toward their chosen goal; they picture the entire universe as struggling with them, and are sure their purpose is the ultimate reason for existence.

Of course, there is a great danger arising from the fact that ideals, which must be provisionally absolute, may become fixed and static—that mythology, which must be the lightest and airiest of all castles in the air, will grow leaden and sink to earth. It is so easy to imagine that Utopia is a place to live in! As a matter of fact men never realize their ideals; they only approach them. As they grow, so do their Heavens. Unfortunately, it often happens that men cling to ideals long after they have ceased to be useful instruments of progress. It is unnecessary to point out how Rousseau's mythology, which worked wonders in the eighteenth century in freeing man from bondage, worked equal wonders in the nineteenth in keeping him in chains. The rights of life, liberty, and happiness became the right to the life, liberty, and happiness of the unfortunate whom you happened to hire in your factory. And it is needless to show how Marx's myth of determinism produced, in some literal-minded souls, a tendency to refrain from all attempts at reform, in the hope that the sooner things got as bad as possible the sooner the revolution would come.

Like every keen and well-sharpened tool, the myth can destroy as well as create. But because boilers blow up, we have not abandoned the use of steam. The only safety in life is in the grave; the only safe method of social organization is not to organize at all. We can



hardly afford, merely to gain seeming security, to forget that the most pragmatic of all instruments of control are ideals.

The trouble comes in when we grow literal-minded enough to think that Utopias are ever intended to be realized on earth, that Heaven is a place to live in. Were our ends ever *the* End, then there might be justification for looking upon them with suspicious eyes. Perhaps it would be better to continue our wanderings, now in one direction, now in another, drawn hither and thither by will-o'-the-wisps, if whole-hearted devotion to any one ideal meant stagnation when it was achieved. But ideals possess their power over human souls just because they never are reached. What would be the mystic potency of the rainbow, if we could discover the pot of gold? Like the rainbow, ideals lead us on and on in our search for perfection; and though we never find the treasure, our eyes are ever toward the rising sun. We must remember that the place for the Heavenly City is not upon earth, but in Heaven; that Plato's Republic is an ideal state, to be realized only in that mythological time when philosophers shall have become kings; and that no Hell could possibly be more terrible than to have to dwell in Heaven.

Of late social philosophy has become so impressed with the real danger of the fixation of ideals which must be absolute for the moment, that it has attempted to dispense with them entirely. Frightened at the havoc absolutes can cause, it has been afraid of all principles. In one sense this is good mythology, for it is obviously elevating the imperative into universals. But this is mythology in the same sense that atheism is a religion or anarchism a theory of government. No one wishes to condone the atrocities committed by intellectual Absolutism; but neither do we desire complete Bolshevism in our social ideals. We need rather a responsible ministry, with plenty of real power, but always subject to a recall if it fails to secure a vote of confidence.

Our pragmatic social philosophy seeks to avoid all suspicion of mythology. It does not claim to have the right solution to any problem; it merely believes it has better solutions, despite the obvious fact that nothing can be better unless something is best. It talks much of criteria and values, but it preserves a discreet silence on what is good and valuable. It is so afraid of getting somewhere that it does not ask whither it is going.

Fortunately, man is much more than his systematized philosophy, and if pragmatic social philosophy has no ideals, the same can not be said of the philosophers who employ it. They have ideals, and very good ones indeed; but they are careful to keep them out of their philosophy. There is, in fact, nothing to hinder sinister forces from capturing instrumentalism, just as they captured that other formal-

istic system, the Kantian two-world view, and filling in the method with dangerous ends of their own.

The only positive ideal we have allowed to creep into instrumentalism is that of Control. We are formulating, we say, a philosophy of social control; we can not become interested in what our fathers used to call principles, for we realize that the best thing to do in any particular case depends entirely upon the specific situation. Give us an actual problem, and we will solve it for you. If you press us, we do have one aim: that is to control and guide men, that in every case we can lead them the better way. We don't know just where we are going, nor exactly how to get there; but we do want to be in control. Instead of loyalty's loyalty, we offer control's control. And so we go careening down Niagara, heedless of the cries of the watchers on the bank. It's all right, we call back; can't you see we have control of the tiller?

The most obvious point about our ceaseless cry to-day for social control is, that, like all good mythologizers, we are calling for what we do not possess. Were we actually able to direct the forces of society into what channel we would, we should be so busy choosing that channel that we should entirely forget that we were directing. The really powerful do not talk about power; they talk about what they are going to do. Only invalids consider their health. We must remember that Bacon, from whom we derive so much of our inspiration for control, held forth the ideal of "extending the bounds of human empire, to the attainment of all things possible," because they were so very, very narrow. In Bacon's day science was in its infancy. Our modern scientists do not talk about controlling the universe; they are too busy removing mountains and dividing continents. When we tell ourselves that we hold within our hands the key to the forces which guide our destinies, it is safe to assume that we have failed to improve man's lot and make the world a better place to live in. When men set about proving the existence of God, they have ceased to walk with him.

If there is any philosophy in the world to-day which has actually controlled, it is the intensely mythological and absolutistic *Staatsphilosophie* of Germany. It did not need to talk about control; it could spend its time on the state and *Deutschtum*. That philosophy we have been opposing; but we have opposed it, not with our philosophy of control, but with one which actually does control, not with pragmatism and experimentalism, but with the ethical idealism we have inherited from our Puritan ancestors. It is not with control that we have combated Prussia; it is with justice and righteousness and liberty and democracy. These are the things men are willing to die for.

Unfortunately, it is not merely that we have become so absorbed with the machinery as to forget the boiler. That would mean only that *we* were not succeeding in *our* enterprise. But man will still build mythologies, though we help him not; and the great danger is that those he builds may resemble that which ruled in Germany. It is all very well to wait for the particular problem to arise before we consider a solution; but unless we have coordinated those problems into one whole, unless we have some general notion of whither as a race we ought to tend, our movement is far more apt to be backward than forward. We are groping in the dark, for we have extinguished the great beacon-light of Truth and Right, writ with capitals; since we have only the flickering candles of little less-falses and betters to show us the way, it is no wonder we find the path strange and full of obstacles.

It is the part of relativism to criticize the mythologies of the past, to prune away the ideals which, no longer serving their original purpose, are working evil instead of good. This is a service which will always be necessary, to offset the dangers of a literal-minded acceptance of mythology. But unless we have something more than that, some new vision of perfection to spur us on, and unless we are convinced that that perfection is worth while for its own sake, we can not hope to aid in social improvement. Pragmatism and experimentalism are admirable instruments for the criticism of old and outworn myths; but to-day the world is clamoring for new visions. To-day the demand is for social reconstruction. It behooves us to consider carefully whether it is not time for us to supplement our excellent method with as excellent a mythology, that we may really guide and control mankind in the new age.

So far we have followed the current of modern thought, and tacitly assumed that it was right in demanding that all philosophy be social, that it be an instrument for the bettering of man's lot and the improvement of his life. We have granted that the aim of philosophy to-day is to control the various factors which make the best life possible; our plea has been that we have mistaken the means, somewhat. But we have already seen that this is but one side to man's mythological completion of the incomplete. Without denying the primary importance of this aspect, let us approach man the myth-maker rather as the dweller in Heaven than the toiler upon earth.

We have found that our control-mythology expresses an ideal, and is not any description of life to-day. But, like all ideals, this too belongs in Heaven, and not on earth. The physical basis of life we shall never be able to change; birth and death, sorrow and pain, will remain. Fortunately, also, we shall never be able to control

more than a small part of our environment. Suppose that the boasts of modern pseudo-scientists were fulfilled. Think what a horrible universe it would be were man able to improve upon the law of gravitation, and put the moon upon a more convenient schedule! We are to-day waging a terrible war because we have learned too well to put the secrets of nature to our own base uses. Could Bacon behold the diabolical products of our New Atlantis, he might well turn his face away in shame. As it is, we seem quite able to destroy the human race. If in our present mood we should gain control of the entire universe, we should probably hurl solar systems at each others' heads and involve whole constellations in our ruin. Or suppose that we should succeed beyond our wildest dreams in that far more difficult task, the control of mankind. Cosmic disintegration would be preferable to the sway of a Controller of Public Opinion, and imagination palls before the power of that supreme Czar, the Happiness Controller.

We control entirely too much, as it is, of our universe. We must learn self-control before we set about governing the stars. What profiteth it a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?

Fortunately, there is so much of existence which must be accepted, whether or no, which is beyond our power to change in the slightest, that the small portion left over may be not unsuited to our limited capacities for direction and change. But in the main, our ideals are never realized; our ventures always fall far short of our hopes. Again and again we fail, and even those who, measured by our standards, have achieved the greatest success, have in their own eyes failed most terribly. The most successful men in history were Socrates and Jesus; but they were also the most magnificent failures.

Failure, imperfection, what we have traditionally called "evil," being the way of the world, it is for our mythology to recognize that man's powers of controlling his environment are after all extremely limited, and to enable him to accept the universe, not resignedly, but joyously. The chief glory of the Middle Ages was the sublime consolation offered to men's bruised souls. It has always been religion's inestimable contribution to human life to show how good may come out of evil; but it has far too often been her failure, that she let that good justify the continuance of the evil. If the danger is great in employing a mythology of control, it is no less in a mythology of consolation. We catch a gleam of hope in an intolerable situation, and we are all prone to let God, or evolution, according to our particular theology, bear the brunt of the responsibility for its alteration. It is such a temptation to apply a mythology admirably suited for securing self-control and consolation in the face of the inevitable, where we might change things for the better if

we were only to try. Here again we must avoid both Scylla and Charybdis; for instance, the world would undoubtedly have gone mad if it had discovered no redeeming features in war, yet it will inevitably go mad if it allows that mythology of consolation to become a mythology of control, and allows wars to continue.

It is to the philosophical enterprise that we must go for a solution. Were existence nothing more than the loose ends we find, one succession of failures, then indeed Hegesias would long ago have been the final philosopher. But man seeks a purpose, a meaning, a worthwhileness in life, and failing to find it round about him, he is impelled by his very nature to invent it and impose it upon the world. Unable to beautify earth, he builds Heaven, and is willing, for the sake of that Heaven, to bide his time in suffering until earth has grown more amenable. He seeks consolation in his ideals, he dwells in the house of the Lord; and there he secures spiritual strength and fortitude, and the power of self-control necessary to the weathering of the blasts of life: unshaken by the evils which he can not avoid, he conserves his energy that he may direct it wholeheartedly against those which he can eradicate. We *must* believe that there is something which makes it all worth while, something of intrinsic value which compensates for all our lack of success. And that something we all of us find in our Heavens. Even the most relativistic of experimentalists has a Heaven, a vision of perfection, to attain which no suffering is too great.

It is true that our mythology differs from the religious mythology inherited from the Middle Ages. In those days, despairing of the world, men placed perfection after death. We place it in the future still, but we hope for the millennium to come upon earth. Both views are mythological, because both assume that perfection is a thing which either does exist now somewhere in the skies, or that will exist sometime in the future. We have not yet learned that it is not in the nature of perfection ever to exist.

The peculiar form our mythology takes to-day is in placing happiness as the end of man, and then believing that it can be increased quantitatively. I suppose there are none of us who would disagree with Mill's Utilitarian principle of the greatest happiness of the greatest number, especially since happiness is a term of such vague content that it can mean almost anything. We believe that this should be the aim of society and of social control; this is our Heaven, and it is in visions of the days when this goal has been attained that we seek consolation from the unhappiness of the present and find inspiration to alter conditions for the better. We imagine that it is possible to increase man's happiness by improving his life. We believe in the myth of progress. We are willing to suffer and die,

if need be, that our visions of social justice and a harmonious and happy world may become realities. This is the spirit with which our doctors, our reformers and social leaders, our armies on the field of battle, our mothers and sisters and wives at home, are enabled to fight the fight for their ideals. What matters it, we say, if you or I or any individual falls and is vanquished; there will always be others to carry on our work and see to it that the ideals we were not able to fulfil shall be accomplished. When the happy day comes when the cure for cancer has been discovered, when the social revolution has taken place, or when international organization has been accomplished, then we shall receive our recompense in the increased happiness of mankind. We are content to fail personally if only we feel we have helped to build more of a Heaven on earth.

And we should know, if we cared to reflect, that this is all mythology; celestial and divine, yes, but nevertheless mythology. For we know that man will never be any happier than he is to-day. Measured in terms of happiness alone, the Greeks were as happy as we are, and the cave-men as happy as the Greeks; for it is a subjective thing, an attitude, and has very little to do with externals. Those who have every boon of life are often most unhappy; while those who must struggle most are often the happiest of men. It is folly feverishly to undergo one hardship after another in the hope of that distant good, when we might have it here and now for the asking. Happiness is valueless if we must wait for a perfect world in which to enjoy it. Whatever advantage our myth of paradise on earth may have over our father's myth of paradise in the sky is certainly not due to greater scientific accuracy.

Behold the result of our refusal to examine the myths we do believe in! Our pragmatic mythology, which consists in a profound faith that we shall succeed in controlling, and that very shortly, may be a good mythology in spurring us on so long as we do succeed; but there will come a time, sooner or later, when we shall fail, and when we shall realize that though perfection is, yet shall it never exist. Brought face to face with the fact of war, for instance, we shall suffer all of the bitter disillusionment of the ascetic who sees his materialistic heaven crumble before his eyes; and as it is folly for him to seek happiness only after death, so is it folly for us to seek our Heaven only when we have attained a perfect world. We who pin all our hopes on being able to control, must realize that the true instrumentalism would know how to fail, would succeed all the more in controlling men's souls when it could not control their environment.

No, our consolation, our happiness, must be sought neither in a mythical state far distant in space, with the Middle Ages, nor far

distant in time, with our later ages. If we are to find it at all, we must find it here and now, in the midst of all the imperfections and evils which exist around us. We must find our Heaven where the Greeks found theirs, where Plato found his, in the blue sky above us. We must see our visions of perfection, and consider them worth while in themselves, independently of whether we succeed or fail in the battle to realize them. The value of the sacrifice of the millions killed in this war, and of the millions more who have given the best of their lives that certain things shall prevail, in no wise depends upon whether those things do prevail or not. Who of us will say, that had Germany conquered, these sacrifices would have been in vain? or that, if, though Germany be defeated, her principles emerge triumphant, the hardships undergone by the world will have been proved futile? And what holds true of the peculiarly dramatic sacrifices of war is just as true of the no less painful and significant sacrifices of peace. Far from being less glorious, sacrifices which fail to succeed in their purpose, which we fondly call "in vain," are even more noble than those which are successful. For the latter secure their reward on earth, while the former gain theirs in Heaven.

Progress, then, is a myth; that is, it has no existence on earth, but belongs to the realm of ideals, to Heaven. It is not measured by what man does to his physical universe; it does not consist in the increase of the general average of happiness in the world. In Mill's famous repudiation of Utilitarianism, and indeed of Hedonism, "It is better to be Socrates dissatisfied than a pig satisfied," the difference is not on earth, but in Heaven. The discrepancy is not between contentment and discontent, but between plenty of mud and swill and the city in the sky, between the perfect pig-pen and the perfect state. Though we be no happier to-day than we were a thousand years ago, we know we are "better off," that our life is a nobler life, nobler in just that measure in which our ideals, our visions, our Heaven is better. We do not want to secure justice and right for the workers in order that they may be happier, but that they may dream nobler dreams. The aim of all our efforts at controlling the factors which make a better physical life for man possible is progress in Heaven.

Happiness, then, is not a state possible only when we have secured a more equitable social organization. It comes, not when we have attained our ideals, but in the very act of struggling and working for them. We are happy only when we have a vision of a better life for man, and set to work to make the world more like our vision. We must believe in our ideal, heart and soul, think that it is the only important thing in the world; and in moments of

struggle we must even accept it as an absolute and hope to realize it actually. But in more reflective moods we must realize that that ideal can never be attained, simply because by the time we have made the life of man a little better by our action we shall have caught a new vision; that is the only criterion of progress. Our pilgrimage will be a long and a hard one, marked by many a failure upon earth; but no sincere effort can fail to take its place in Heaven, where it will cast a radiancy of glory over all succeeding visions. We use our ideals to improve the natural basis whence they have sprung; and in its turn the better social conditions give rise to new and better mythologies. The process has neither beginning nor end; it is one continual improvement of Heaven. And when we fail, as we often must, when all looks black around us, and our efforts seem in vain, we can control ourselves and bide our time, in the absolute knowledge that whether we succeed or not, it is better to have died with the right than to have conquered with the wrong. In the noble words of Giordano Bruno:

*E bench' il fin bramato non consegua,  
E 'n tanto studio l'alma si dilegea,  
Basta che sia si nobilmente accesa!*

If our reading of the book of life be correct, we have found a mythology a little more in accord with the actual way in which man approaches the obstacles besetting his path than the prevailing experimentalistic mythology. We instrumentalists have not examined carefully enough the natural basis of our ideal of social control. We have caught a vision of a better life, a life in which Reason shall harmonize and coordinate our actions. We have found the crying need of the world to be some method of bringing about those changes of whose necessity we are so convinced; and we have developed a method which bids fair to succeed. Individually, we have our ideals; and we have nearly achieved a remarkably effective means of approaching them in the social structure. But let us not forget that the driving power of our movement is its ideals, its mythology; let us make our pragmatism more pragmatic, and our instrumentalism more instrumentalistic, not by disclaiming all Utopias, all provisional absolutes, but by recognizing them as the one great phenomenon marking man off from the brute. Let us preserve our experimental methods of achieving what we have decided is worth achieving; but let us remember that our guiding and directing must be towards the Heavenly city in the sky. And, lest we despair at our ill-success, let us not forget that the only true progress must take place in Heaven, and that even if our sacrifices avail nought towards making our nation a better nation, there is



not one which does not build a new mansion in the golden streets of Zion.

This, then, is the conclusion to which we are brought by our consideration of man as the animal who asks "What is man?" who builds new worlds and new Heavens. Man, grown philosophic, can, nay must, accept the universe; not for the crude thing it is, but for what he and his fellows can make of it. He must accept it for the sake of the ideals it calls forth from him, for the wonderful opportunity it affords him to dream his dreams and make them come true. Satisfied and contented he can never be, for the attainment of one Utopia will find him longing for the next. But he can and must find his happiness in the very act of struggling for a better life. He must find it in the myth that he is helping to make others happy in the future; but he must recognize that their happiness will be as his, and that they will find it in improving life even as he has found it.

Man, grown philosophic, will know when to control conditions and when, in the face of the inevitable, to control himself; he will know that the world is a wonderful place to live in because it does offer him the opportunity to find Heaven, and through Heaven to make a new earth. He will not seek, with the monk, to withdraw from life in the fond hope of attaining an impossible Paradise; but neither will he give up the search. He will see the possibility of Paradise on earth, the perfect in the imperfect; and he will set out to guide and direct mankind to better things. His program for action, his ideals, he will find in Heaven; and his Heaven he will find in working for his ideals.

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### THE OBJECTIVITY OF PLEASURE

THE history of the development of thought is in large part the story of a search for more suitable standards. The most obvious standard would seem to be a personal one, for it appears to be ready-made and always accessible. Soon, however, the individual finds it difficult to get along in a world where there are as many standards as standard bearers and he is forced to inquire whether there is not some one criterion by which all others may be measured.

Something like this has occurred in the history of hedonism. If pleasure was the ideal then the ideal was easily recognized, for did not every man know his own pleasure? In order to recognize a pleasure was it not necessary to occupy the unique position of the individual who was experiencing it?